PREFACE

A FEW years of friendship quickly following on our first official relations and continued until his tragic and untimely end constitute my claim to preface the biography of Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra Bhanj Deo with a word of tribute to his clear and noble soul. In one sense it must have been an easy life to write for the character and the career were singularly free from complications. Born to be the head of a State, and, because he was very early left an orphan, destined to assume the duties of that position at the earliest possible moment, Sri Ram Chandra Bhanj Deo was trained for his future work by people with a high ideal of its demands; he accepted that ideal from the first and followed it to the end. No one similarly placed has ever been less distracted by conflicting standards of what is worth living for; least of all was he dazzled by the mere vanities and baubles offered so

profusely and insistently to the wealthy and powerful. Many times in his life he must have had great difficulty in deciding the course he was to follow, but never any in taking duty as the touchstone to apply. The conception of a ruler as the first servant of his people is not new in India, nor is its practical application exceptional, though it is more general now than at some periods of the past; but certainly it has never had a more consistent exponent than the late Maharaja.

The mere material results of his all too brief rule give some measure of the industry and concentration which went to produce them. He was allowed only twenty years for his task. Certainly he had a fair start; when he took charge of his State it was already moving on the road by which he intended that it should travel. Other circumstances were favourable, he had perhaps to encounter less than usual of the opposition which all reformers must expect, for his people were loyal and docile, he had capable and faithful servants—that was all to his credit for they were mainly his own choice—

and sympathetic advisers in the successive political officers with whom he was in relations. His administrative career did not, of course, escape its share of the drawbacks incidental to all human enterprise. There were exceptions to the very general success of his undertakings. Some experiments failed, some things had to be begun over again, but the deductions due to these are trifling in comparison with the total sum. It may also be said that the Maharaja was less wedded to preconceived ideas and more ready to acknowledge error than the majority of those who are in a position to give practical effect to their own conceptions. When all favouring elements have been allowed for and all deductions made for cases of failure or incomplete success, the progress made in every direction in Mayurbhanj between 1892 and 1912 was beyond ordinary experience and such as could only have been attained by untiring industry and perfect singleness of purpose. His country grown from a rude jungle mahal to a prosperous and highly developed and equipped modern State, is Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra Bhanj Deo's

monument, than which no man could desire one more splendid.

This appreciation of his public labours may have given an impression of extreme austerity and detachment from domestic interests. Nothing could be further from the fact. Sri Ram Chandra Bhanj Deo was deeply responsive to all the chords of human affection, and more than once had to suffer severely where he was most sensitive.

Babu Sailendra Nath Sarkar, who served him long and knew him well, has striven to give a faithful and sympathetic presentment of a fine character and has, I think, succeeded in producing one which will give pleasure to all who honour the pursuit of high ideals and will arouse the patriotic pride of Indians who have confidence in the will and capacity of their natural leaders to meet the demands of their high vocation.

F. W. DUKE.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

SRI RAM CHANDRA BHANJ DEO, the late Maharaja of Mayurbhanj, was a man whose private character and public life, whose amiable disposition, simple habits, charming and unassuming manners, profound scholarship, administrative ability, highmindedness and zeal for work, were such as to win the appreciation, regard and affection of all who knew him. In fact his character and career were such as to set a not unworthy example to others, whether of high or low estate, of a life well led and duty well done ; and so with the object of making more widely known the facts of this life, and perhaps of inducing others to follow in his footsteps, Mr. B. Borroah, out of his admiration for and friendship with the late Maharaja, offered a handsome prize for the writing of his biography and undertook to defray all costs of its publication and translation from his own purse. Accordingly a Committee was

appointed in the State to choose an author and approve of the book, and the Committee selected my humble self from among others, as I have some knowledge of the State, though it would have been better if a more competent man were entrusted with the task; for, I am afraid, that with my poor ability, I have not succeeded in doing full justice to the hero of the book. However, the book has been approved by the Committee, and is now published in the hope that it may meet with the appreciation of the public as an effort to do justice to and perpetuate the memory of a man whose ideals and achievements deserve to be widely known. I crave the indulgence of the public to overlook the faults and defects in style and idiom; for, after all, they should bear in mind that the book has been written by an Indian in a foreign tongue.

I cannot sufficiently express my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. C. L. Philip, M.A., I.C.S., the popular Superintendent of the Mayurbhanj State and President of the Maharaja Shri Ram Chandra Memorial Committee, for rendering me invaluable help, by kindly

revising the book before publication, and lending me many official documents and records of the Mayurbhanj State from which to draw materials for the work.

I also beg to acknowledge my debt to Mr. L. E. B. Cobden Ramsay, I.C.S., C.I.E., for the help which I derived from his book entitled "Feudatory States of Orissa" ("Bengal Gazetteer," Vol. XXI). My best thanks are also due to Rautrai Sahib Sridam Chandra Bhanj Deo, brother of the late Maharaja, and to some officers of the State for supplying me with materials for the book.

S. N. SARKAR.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
CHAPTER	I.—A Brief Account of Mayurbhanj and its People ..	1
,,	II.—A Short History of the Raj Family	9
,,	III.—Mayurbhanj under Srinath Chandra Bhanj Deo and Krishna Chandra Bhanj Deo	22
,,	IV.—Birth and Early Life of Sri Ram Chandra	33
,,	V.—His School and College Life—His Accession to the Gadi..	42
,,	VI.—Sri Ram Chandra's Marriage—Birth of his Children—Death of his Wife	50
,,	VII.—Bestowal of the Title of "Maharaja" on Sri Ram Chandra — His Second Marriage	55
,,	VIII.—Visit of Sir Andrew Fraser—Opening of the Mayurbhanj State Light Railway ..	60
,,	IX.—Death of the Maharaja's Daughter — His Robust Optimism	66

PAGE.

CHAPTER X.—Extension of his Powers—Arrangement for the Education of his Children—His Foreign Travels—The Title of Hereditary Maharaja conferred on him by Government .. 73

" XI.—The Delhi Durbar—His Active Interest in the Calcutta Pageant—His Death by Accident 87

" XII.—Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra as an Administrator—His Policy and his Ideals 96

" XIII.—The Maharaja as an Administrator (continued) — Improvement of the Conditions of his People 105

" XIV.—The Maharaja as an Administrator (continued) — Development of Material Resources of the State 116

" XV.—The Maharaja as an Administrator (concluded) — Public Works—His Chief Officers—Appreciation of his Work .. 125

" XVI.—Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra as a Man—His personal appearance and manners—His self-denial and simplicity—His sense of duty and justice—His love of work—His thirst for knowledge—His fine character 138

PAGE.

APPENDIX.—"Theism: The Nation's Need."—Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra's Address as President of the Reception Committee of the All-India Theistic Conference, December, 1906 .. 153

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra Bhanj Deo .. .. .. *Frontispiece.*

PAGE.

2. Jagannath Temple, Baripada .. 15
3. Mr. H. B. Kiddell 38
4. Belgoria Palace 48
5. Maharani Lakshmi Kumari Devi Memorial, Ranibag 54
6. Rajbati 63
7. Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra and Members, Indo-Japanese Association, Tokio .. 78
8. Minor Maharaja Purno Chandra Bhanj Deo 89
9. Crushers and Siding—Gurumahisani Iron Works 122
10. Victoria Diamond Jubilee Institute, Baripada 127